CHAPTER 46

TRANSATLANTIC ENGAGEMENTS

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In a letter dated 18 May 1810, written from Natchez, in the Mississippi Territory, the Scottish-poet-turned-American-ornithologist Alexander Wilson describes listening to a mockingbird, the first he had heard in 'the western country' (as Mississippi, not a state of the Union until 1817, then was). Its song was cut short:

> One of the savages had marked his elevation, and barbarously shot him. I hastened over into the yard, and, walking up to him, told him that was bad, very bad! that this poor bird had come from a far distant country to sing to him, and that, in return, he had cruelly killed him. I told him the Great Spirit was offended at such cruelty, and that he would lose many a deer for doing so.[1]

The episode is full of echoes and paradoxes. Writing in the middle years of the Romantic period, and in a 'western country' east of the Mississippi River, Wilson audibly recalls both the situation and the 'far countree' of Coleridge's 'The Ancient Mariner'—a poem which in turn had been influenced by the writings of Wilson's patron and friend, the American naturalist William Bartram.[2] Born in Paisley in 1766, Wilson is one of the truly transatlantic figures of the Romantic period. By trade a handloom weaver, he was twice imprisoned in the early 1790s for writing radical satires against mill-owners, and emigrated to the United States in 1794, becoming a citizen in 1804. *The Foresters: A Poem Descriptive of a Pedestrian Journey to the Falls of Niagara in the Autumn of 1804* (published in *The Port Folio* in 1809–10 and in volume form in 1818) is one of the earliest

[1] To Alexander Lawson, in *The Life and Letters of Alexander Wilson*, ed. Clark Hunter (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1983), 366.

[2] See John Livingston Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu: A Study in the Ways of the Imagination* (London: Constable, 1927), 46–53.

extended poetic treatments of North American scenery, and his nine-volume *American Ornithology; or, The Natural History of the Birds of the United States* (1808–14) is the first systematic study in its field. The reprise of 'The Ancient Mariner' in Natchez, 1810, introduces the main themes of this chapter: intertextual transatlantic cultures, and their consequences for British Romantic writing and subsequent scholarship; the boundaries of national identity, national literary history, and the 'literary' itself; the conditions and contexts of intellectual exchange; altercations between cultures (or, rather, as in the figure of Wilson's silent 'savage', constructed images, often stereotypical, of cultures).

There is a mutually formative but exceptionally intricate relationship between what is now called British Romanticism and the new political, social, and literary culture taking shape in the United States during the decades following the ratification of its constitution in 1787. Ideas, and books, moved back and forth across the Anglophone Atlantic, as did increasing numbers of travellers and migrants. Transatlantic reception became a crucial element in the dissemination of Romantic poetry and prose; and in theatre, too, new performance histories, for American and British works alike, were fashioned transatlantically. Amid complex networks of cultural exchange in local and specific contexts, it can be difficult to disentangle terms of engagement, especially over a period of swift change which included years of military and naval conflict between the nations in question (the War of Independence [1776–83], and the 1812–14 war). In this period, neither nation could gauge the boundaries (conceptual as well as territorial) of the other, or be entirely sure of its own. This statement may seem, pragmatically, more true of 'the' United States, which added thirteen to its original thirteen constituents between 1791 and 1837, and which, with a population which nearly equalled that of Britain by 1830 and far exceeded it by 1840, was a fast-expanding as well as an ethnically and linguistically varied interlocutor in the years of British Romanticism. Britain's boundaries also changed in these years, however, with the Acts of Union incorporating Ireland, a strengthening of empire in India, and the growing importance of Australia and New Zealand as alternative frontiers 'south of the west'. This chapter addresses key areas of debate in transatlantic Romanticism, focusing on Anglophone engagements between Britain and the United States as a distinct force in Romanticism—that is, as distinct from British engagements with South and Central America, with Canada, and with the West Indies—in order to identify a culturally specific aesthetic interaction.

The recorded history of the word 'transatlantic' places it as a late eighteenth-century conceptualization of space. The *Oxford English Dictionary*'s earliest citation of the term is from a letter written in 1779 by John Wilkes, referring to a 'trans-atlantic voyage'. In 1782 Thomas Jefferson employed it when considering 'whether nature has enlisted herself as a cis- or trans-Atlantic partisan'.[3] As these early usages show, on both sides of the Atlantic the term described either a crossing of the ocean or something on the other side. As 'America' became established British parlance for the United States specifically,

[3] As cited in *Oxford English Dictionary* (at: www.oed.com): Wilkes, *Correspondence* (1805), v. 212; Jefferson, *Writings and Correspondence* (1894), iii. 193.

'transatlantic' took on cultural as well as geographical meanings. *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* used the collective noun 'The Trans-Atlantics', meaning 'Americans', in 1826; and Walter Scott wrote in his *Journal* on 2 May 1831 'I must get finishd with *Count Robert [of Paris*—his penultimate completed novel] who is progressing, as the transatlantic say, at a very slow pace indeed.'[4] From the late 1830s, when transatlantic steamships began regular voyages, to the mid-1860s, when the first long-functioning transatlantic cable was laid, the term became increasingly associated with travel and communications across the Atlantic, as distinct from something which was, from either land-mass, 'over on the other side'.

As late as 1989, in the second edition of the *OED*, 'transatlantic' continued to be explained as 'passing or extending across' the Atlantic or 'situated, resident beyond' it. Intriguingly, however, the term has been very subtly on the move since then. Today, the *OED Online* glosses 'transatlantic' as 'crossing the Atlantic', 'concerning countries on both sides of the Atlantic', and 'related to or situated on the other side'. Since 1989, that is, 'transatlantic' has become more relational and more inclusive, suggesting links (economic, intellectual, intercultural) *between* rather than merely passage *across*. It may be that this subtle shift reflects a movement in literary and historical scholarship: over the last thirty years, historiographical work, taking many of its cues from Robert Weisbuch's model of 'Atlantic double-cross', has transformed understandings, and conceptualizations, of Romanticism.[5] Part of a more general shift towards transnational interpretation, transatlantic Romanticism examines points of contact and contestation, emphasizing shared conversations and the links and continuities between Britain and the former colonies. Readings of individual works and genres have been guided or more locally inflected by an appreciation of transatlantic contexts and by specific topics such as emigration, political idealism, slavery, ethnicity, travel-narrative, and trade. Paul Gilroy's model of the 'Black Atlantic' has been adapted to the 'Red' or 'Indian' Atlantic;[6] and the human freight of the slave trade has been a constituent factor in transatlanticism, which implicitly, on an ideological level, refashions the routes of trade and human trafficking. Transatlantic scholarship has made it possible, too, to see the close connections between communities of readers, further breaking down what have traditionally been regarded as separate national literary histories. Lateral confluences, rather than linear influences, have provided a new model for intertextual studies: in this and in other ways,

[4] *The Journal of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. W. E. K. Anderson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 650.

[5] Robert Weisbuch, *Atlantic Double-Cross: American Literature and British Influence in the Age of Emerson* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986). In addition to other studies listed in Further Reading, see Will Kaufman and Heidi Slettedahl Macpherson (eds), *New Perspectives in Transatlantic Studies* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2002); Laura M. Stevens, 'Transatlanticism Now', *American Literary History* 16.1 (2004), 93–104; and Chris Koenig-Woodyard, Lance Newman, and Joel Pace (eds), *Transatlantic Romanticism*, double special issue, *Romanticism on the Net* 38–9 (2005), at: www.erudit.org/en/journals/ron/2005-n38-39-ron988/.

[6] Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Tim Fulford and Kevin Hutchings (eds), *Native Americans and Anglo-American Culture, 1750–1850: The Indian Atlantic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

transatlanticism has had methodological as well as material consequences for readings of Romanticism.[7]

The other term of my title, 'engagements', however, suggests something both more intimate and more barbed than 'dialogues' or 'confluence'. It denotes debts and contracts, skirmishes and joined battle, as well as intellectual and creative involvement. Much transatlantic writing was openly combative, a prime example being Thomas Moore's caustic epistles 'To the Lord Viscount Forbes' and 'To Thomas Hume', in *Epistles, Odes, and Other Poems* (1806), both addressed 'From the City of Washington' to prominent Irish politicians he had met in London. Moore's political deflations were all the more damaging for being written (as he describes in the collection's Preface) by someone prepared to be convinced by the United States. The rhetoric of disappointment was powerful and was deployed by both sides. In 1815, just after the end of armed combat between Britain and the United States, hostilities resumed in the so-called 'Paper War', at its centre a critique of Charles Jared Ingersoll's *Inchiquin the Jesuit's Letters* (1810) in the *Quarterly Review*.[8] This drew a response from one of the most formidable intellectual figures of the early republic, Timothy Dwight—President of Yale, Congregationalist preacher, professor of theology, author (amongst many other works) of the nation-building song 'Columbia' (1777) and the United States' first epic poem, *The Conquest of Canaan; The Triumph of Infidelity* (1785). Dwight's *Remarks on the Review of Inchiquin's Letters* (1815) offered an extensive comparative analysis of elements in the social, political, and professional systems of Britain and the United States, and argued for the preservation of a 'natural' friendship. That this rebuttal should have been occasioned by a review (which Dwight, like others, wrongly traced to Southey, who had also written about 'unnatural strife' in his 'Ode, 1814, Written During the War with America') indicates the growing power of the British literary reviews (see William Christie, Chapter 18 in this volume), and the extent to which the United States had become a common target.

In the very different world of popular theatre, British–American rivalries were expressed even less temperately. Walter Scott records, with barely suppressed delight, the frays induced by a stage adaptation of James Fenimore Cooper's novel *The Pilot* (1824) at London's Adelphi Theatre in 1826 which 'turned the odious and ridiculous parts assigned by the original author to the British, against the Yankees themselves', guaranteeing American displeasure and the influx each night of sailors from Wapping to cheer on the British national cause.[9] Despite the close transatlantic bonds forged by individuals in this period—Mary Wollstonecraft's relationship with Gilbert Imlay; Coleridge's friendship with Washington Allston; Francis Jeffrey's second marriage, to Charlotte

[7] See Susan Manning, '"Grounds for Comparison": The Place of Style in Transatlantic Romanticism', in Joel Pace and Matthew Scott (eds), *Wordsworth in American Literary Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); and Manning's *Fragments of Union: Making Connections in Scottish and American Writing* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), esp. ch. 1.

[8] See Joseph Eaton, *The Anglo-American Paper War: Debates about the New Republic, 1800–1825* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), ch. 2.

[9] Scott, *Journal*, 219.

Wilks, in New York; and the conversations, in person and across novels, between Scott and Cooper, who met in Paris soon after the performance at the Adelphi—in the culture at large, national antagonisms and prejudices remained strong on both sides.

Some writers and commentators, however, tried to challenge these prejudices and to create a more inclusive and connected literary culture. Two striking examples of this, and of the ambivalence that frequently accompanied such attempts, are William Hazlitt's *The Spirit of the Age* (1825) and Thomas Campbell's *Specimens of the British Poets* (1819), a little-known work which constitutes British literary history's first alternative canon. Were it not for a coda praising the minor historical dramatist Sheridan Knowles, Hazlitt's definitive survey of Romantic-period Britain would have ended with an assessment of the 'literary anachronisms' of the New York essayist Washington Irving. 'Elia, and Geoffrey Crayon', the final substantial essay of *The Spirit of the Age*, contrasts the 'native' idiosyncrasies of 'Elia' (Charles Lamb) to the imitative charm of 'Crayon' (Irving), who 'has culled and transplanted the flowers of modern literature, for the amusement of the general reader'.[10] Four years later, in a long review essay for the *Edinburgh Review* occasioned by William Ellery Channing's *Sermons and Tracts*, Hazlitt once again delights in picturing Irving 'in the bare, broad, straight, mathematical streets of his native city, his busy fancy wander[ing] through the blind alleys and huddled zig-zag sinuosities of London'.[11] One culture is empty, but clear; the other dense and intricate, but constrained. 'Elia, and Geoffrey Crayon' bristles with a larger, unvoiced, spirit of competition. If Lamb's culturally earned peculiarities cannot reach the readership captured by Irving, coming to 'the parent country' and working 'at second hand', what is to prevent the United States ventriloquizing and appropriating British culture, at least in the opinion of that unknown quantity, 'the general reader'? In itself, the turn to designedly old-fashioned writers at the end of *The Spirit of the Age* counteracts the presumed progressiveness of the age's 'spirit' (as Hazlitt argues, Lamb succeeds not by conforming to this spirit, but 'in opposition to it'). Like other British writings of its time, *The Spirit of the Age* is unable to repress, but also unable fully to include, its sense of a future forming in the west.

The alternative to Hazlitt's spiky comparativism was Campbell's apparently untroubled reappropriation. Like Hazlitt, who spent three years of his childhood in Boston, where his father was a prominent Unitarian preacher, Thomas Campbell had personal ties with the United States and supported its political values. His father had lived in Virginia and had owned a tobacco import business in Glasgow which was badly affected by the War of Independence. Campbell twice came close to emigrating to the United States, in 1797–8 and 1817–19. When he took over the editorship of the *New Monthly Magazine* in 1821, he declared pro-Americanism a principle of editorial policy, and he applies a similar policy to his *Specimens of the British Poets* by including an American voice, Timothy Dwight, from whose epic *The Conquest of Canaan* he gives

[10] *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, ed. P. P. Howe, 21 vols (London: Dent, 1930–4), xi. 178.
[11] *Complete Works of Hazlitt*, xvi. 318–19.

nine pages of excerpts. He takes a section from Book 5 describing the death of Irad and lamentation of Selima, followed by an extract from the angel's prediction of 'the future discovery and happiness of America', 'a mighty realm' which is to be 'the last retreat for poor oppress'd mankind' but also a 'world imperial' distinct from all others and awaiting its 'destined period' and its new Moses.[12] The details of the selection suggest a wish on Campbell's part to counterbalance eighteenth-century British imperial verse with a vision of colonial emancipation. Yet his introductory remarks on Dwight are strangely disengaged: 'Of this American poet I am sorry to be able to give the British reader no account. I believe his personal history is as little known as his poetry on this side of the Atlantic.' (The manuscript supports the view that he had nothing to add. Campbell begins 'Of this American I believe', then crosses out 'believe' and moves straight to the apology.)[13] The generous space given to Dwight's poetry contends with the unexplained decision to include him in the first place, and with the paucity of information supplied. Despite the apparent contradictions, the effect for Campbell's readers was to present Dwight as new poetic territory to be explored.

This literary invitation echoes opportunities for American exploration of a more literal kind. In the years following the ratification of the United States Constitution in 1787, the French Revolution, Britain's war with France from 1793, and the repressive political climate in Britain had made the United States an increasingly attractive prospect for emigration. Emigration had a double, and somewhat contradictory, appeal, as radical alternative and as conservative refuge. The United States offered political and religious freedom, but also land for sale and the chance to reinstate an agrarian economy. The demography of emigration is complicated, and the available statistics reveal little about reasons for emigration to and from the United States, or about the motivations of the many back-migrants. Indeed, as Stephen Fender has shown, the discourses of emigration contradict the statistics, which indicate that between 1815 and 1832 the number of people emigrating from British ports to the United States (around 205,500) was greatly exceeded by the number emigrating to Canada (334,000), with significant numbers also going to Australia and New Zealand.[14] The encouragement to enter United States society offered in the early stages of independence, notably in Benjamin Franklin's *Information to Those Who Would Remove to America* (1782), was followed by more guarded accounts as the population grew. Emigrant guides became a flourishing subgenre of Romantic-period travel writing, and the market for settlement was competitive. Some of these guides, notably those by Henry Bradshaw Fearon and Morris Birkbeck (which helped inspire the emigration of Keats's brother George and

[12] Thomas Campbell (ed.), *Specimens of the British Poets; with Biographical and Critical Notices, and An Essay on English Poetry*, 7 vols (London: John Murray, 1819), vii. 135. For biographical information, see Charles Duffy, 'Thomas Campbell and America', *American Literature* 13 (1942), 346–55.

[13] Huntington MS HM 33781, f. 151.

[14] Stephen Fender, *Sea Changes: British Emigration and American Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 37–8.

sister-in-law Georgiana in 1818), have become focal points for the analysis of discourses about the United States in the Romantic Period.[15]

The emigration of the political philosopher and Unitarian Joseph Priestley was especially influential, helping to shape Southey's and Coleridge's plans to form a Pantisocracy on the banks of the same river, the Susquehanna, in Pennsylvania, and focusing the minds of many conservative critics in the United States, most vociferously William Cobbett in this 'Peter Porcupine' stage of his journalistic career, on the disruptive effects of the wrong kind of ideological immigrant. Pantisocracy was the product of the belief, as Southey put it in his 1837 Preface to his collected works, 'that a happier order of things had commenced with the independence of the United States, and would be accelerated by the French Revolution'.[16] Textually, the scheme produced Coleridge's sonnets 'Pantisocracy' and 'On the Prospect of Establishing a Pantisocracy in America' (both dating from 1794, though not published until 1826 and 1849 respectively), and the lines on 'the Dell | Of Peace and mild Equality' in 'To a Young Ass' (published in the *Morning Chronicle* in December 1794 and in *Poems on Various Subjects* in 1796) which became a target for Coleridge's contemporary detractors—and a source of amusement for later writers such as Byron and Peacock. Increasingly, critics have regarded the aborted Pantisocracy project as foundational to Coleridge's and Southey's subsequent thinking, and to key elements of British Romanticism as a whole.[17]

Of more enduring interest to Southey was the belief in a tribe of Welsh-speaking Indians said to be descended from the followers of Prince Madoc who sailed to the west in 1170, an idea promulgated by, among others, the Welsh poet Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg), whose work Southey consulted in preparing his epic poem on this theme, *Madoc* (1805) (see Mary-Ann Constantine, Chapter 8 in this volume). Williams's quasi-autobiographical 'Sonnet, to Hope, on an Intention of Emigrating to America' and his 'Address to the Inhabitants of Wales, Exhorting them to Emigrate, with William Penn, to Pennsylvania' (purportedly written, in Welsh, by an 'Anonymous Emigrant, about the Time of the first Settlement of that Colony') are two of his many works on the theme of emigration, real and fictitious, and the 'Address' is a notable instance in a modern context of the idea of emigration to escape religious persecution.[18] The interlinked stories of Pantisocracy and the Welsh Indians reinforce the point that the United States, and the western territories beyond it, had a far from simple, or uniform, political meaning

[15] See James Chandler, *England in 1819: The Politics of Literary Culture and the Case of Romantic Historicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), ch. 8.

[16] *The Poetical Works of Robert Southey, Collected by Himself*, 10 vols (London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1837–8), i, p. xxix.

[17] For examples, see Nicholas Roe, *Wordsworth and Coleridge: The Radical Years* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 257–62; Kenneth R. Johnston, 'The Political Sciences of Life: From American Pantisocracy to British Romanticism', in Nicholas Roe (ed.), *Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the Sciences of Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); and Michael Wiley, *Romantic Migrations: Local, National, and Transnational Dispositions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 63–87.

[18] Both poems appear in Edward Williams, *Poems, Lyric and Pastoral*, 2 vols (London: for the author, 1794).

for British writers and thinkers. Pantisocracy was underpinned by a variety of not easily compatible philosophical and social convictions, as was demonstrated when Southey and Coleridge turned out to have deep disagreements both about Godwinianism and about the keeping of servants. Yet the scheme harnessed a radical social idealism to the excitement of a new-found territory, just as the project of finding the Welsh Indians, implying as it did a protest against English rule, was, at the same time, a territorial enterprise, a way of reclaiming a lost inheritance.

A transatlantic ideological engagement of a more tangible and historically important kind was the involvement of writers and campaigners in the pressure, building from the late 1780s in Britain, to abolish the slave trade. In the early 1790s, British traders were consigning 45,000 Africans annually to the West Indies and the United States. In the same period, British readers consumed eight editions of *The Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano* (1789) by 1794. Powerfully focused politically, with parliamentary leadership from William Wilberforce and abolitionist organizations across Britain (led by the example of Thomas Clarkson), abolitionism appealed across all social sectors and cut across established boundaries of political conviction and class. Writers played a vital role in imagining, and drawing attention to, the horrors of slavery, and slavery—literal or symbolic—became a central theme in the thinking of several Romantic authors.

The best example of this is William Blake, who depicts enslavement, physical and mental, as a universal evil. In 'The Little Black Boy', from *Songs of Innocence* (1789), Blake shows the internalization of ethnic difference: 'my soul is white', the speaker declares, feeling that the white child will love him if he can 'be like him', even though it is the black child who leads the white to God.[19] Oothoon, 'soft soul of America', in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (1791–2) speaks for the victimized and to the 'enslaved' daughters of Albion, reinforcing the connection made by Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) between the condition of women and of slaves. Slavery was also a connecting topic in the later work of William Cowper, linking sharp social observations in poems such as 'The Morning Dream' and 'Sweet Meat Has Sour Sauce; or, the Slave-Trader in the Dumps' with the political endorsement of his 1792 sonnet 'To William Wilberforce' and the humanitarian pathos of his much-anthologized poem 'The Negro's Complaint' (1788). Coleridge lectured on the slave trade as part of his 1795 lecture series, undertaken to finance the Pantisocracy project, and returned to the theme in his poem 'Fears in Solitude' (1798), which offers a damning acknowledgement of Britain's global guilt ('The wretched plead against us' [line 45]). Slavery was a recurrent element, too, in Southey's work: his poetic corpus on this theme includes the six anti-slave-trade sonnets of 1794, 'To the Genius of Africa' (1795), 'The Dancing Bear: Recommended to the Advocates for the Slave-Trade' (1799), and 'Verses, Spoken in the Theatre at Oxford, upon the Installation of Lord Grenville' (1810). The topic was equally prominent in women's writing, notable examples being Mary Robinson's 'The Negro Girl' (1800), Amelia Opie's 'The Black Man's Lament' (1826), and Hannah More's

[19] *Blake: The Complete Poems*, ed. W. H. Stevenson, 3rd edn (Harlow: Longman-Pearson, 2007), 63.

widely read *The Sorrows of Yamba; or, The Negro Woman's Lamentation*, published in her *Cheap Repository Tracts* series in 1795. Many of these works were expressly intended as anti-slavery propaganda and, as such, they constituted an important part of the pressure for abolition.[20]

Necessarily, some anti-slavery literature, such as James Montgomery's poem *The West Indies* (1809) and Matthew Lewis's *Journal of a West India Proprietor* (1834), analysed slave economies beyond the United States, but after the abolition of the slave trade in the British empire in 1807, critiques bifurcated. One strand, which included the continuing work of Clarkson, focused on ending the practice of slavery, not only the trade in slaves; and, in the British empire, acts to bring about a partial emancipation of slaves were in place in 1834, with full emancipation in 1838. Literary reflections of these campaigns appear in works such as Wordsworth's 1807 sonnet to Clarkson and the account of 'The Anti-Saccharine Fête' in chapter 27 of Thomas Love Peacock's novel *Melincourt* (1817). Accounts of the United States, meanwhile, increasingly focused on slavery as a way of criticizing the new democracy as a whole. Instead of the stylized 'laments' of the 1790s, perfectly suited to marshall sympathy in a political cause, writers, especially in social analyses of the 1820s and 1830s, detailed the conditions of slaves, personal encounters, and the complications of economic and social circumstances. The Wollstonecraftian social reformer Frances Wright first visited the United States in 1818–20, published *Views of Society and Manners in America* in London in 1821, then returned to establish the 'model plantation' of Nashoba, Tennessee (1824–8). Frances Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1832) was infamously hostile to the United States and correspondingly tender in its accounts of slave children. Harriet Martineau's *Society in America* (1837) looked forward to the elimination of slavery from the United States, which need no longer be 'the country of the double-faced pretender to the name of Liberty'.[21]

I turn now to another kind of 'transatlantic engagement' which underpins all literary exchange: the contractual. Books, and the essays, poems, reviews, and extracts contained within them, are physical objects, produced, shipped, bought, circulated, reviewed, pirated, plagiarized, annotated. The transatlantic literary marketplace in the Romantic period was an economic and legal structure which shaped which books were read, how, and where; and who profited from them, financially and intellectually. During the colonial period, American readers depended on supplies of books from London (and, increasingly, from Edinburgh and Dublin). Organized book-reading communities began early, the Library Company of Philadelphia (1731) soon being followed by societies in Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and South Carolina. Supplying a transatlantic market was logistically complicated, but, partly because of

[20] See Helen Thomas, *Romanticism and Slave Narratives: Transatlantic Testimonies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Marcus Wood, *Blind Memory: Visual Representations of Slavery in England and America, 1780–1865* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); and Debbie Lee, *Slavery and the Romantic Imagination* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).

[21] Harriet Martineau, *Society in America*, 3 vols (London: Saunders and Otley, 1837), i. 199.

rapid population growth, bonds between British booksellers and American markets strengthened even at the point of political independence and during the 1812–14 war.[22] However, the variable distribution of population in the United States, and competition between large cities, created market conditions quite distinct from those within Britain. Detailed studies of particular reading communities, manufacturers, and suppliers—notably the all-important paper-mills—highlight the variables in centres of production and of consumption, and in transatlantic interactions.[23] In the first half of the nineteenth century, moreover, domestic book production in the United States grew even more rapidly than population: valued at $2.5 million annually in 1820, it stood at $12.5 million by 1850. Major names in American publishing (including Houghton, Harper, Ticknor and Fields, and Carey and Lea) date from the same half-century, and new technologies of print manufacture (and, in turn, stereotyping, case binding, and the powered press) reinforced a new American independence in the production and sales of books.

A major factor in the transatlantic book economy was a contentious piece of protectionist legislation which had long-term and far-reaching consequences. From 1787, American states established a new copyright system, based on the British Act of 1710 and protecting American publications, but excluding from copyright any work first published outside the United States. This entered federal law in 1790 and, supported by a levelled pricing structure for new and old titles, made available to American readers the latest publications and editions of collected or extracted works not commercially viable in Britain. Most prominently in the case of Scott—all of whose novels were pirated, sometimes from pre-publication proofs, in the United States, and who was ruinously in debt from January 1826—this caused individual hardship and growing public aggravation. After meeting James Fenimore Cooper in Paris in November 1826, Scott took up with his publishers Cooper's suggestion that the problem might be overcome by registering the works as the property of a United States citizen—but to no avail.[24] For readers, however, the situation had more than the obvious financial advantages. William St Clair notes: 'The three poets whom it was most difficult to buy from mainstream bookshops in Britain, Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats, were available to mainstream readerships in the United States a generation before they reached such audiences in Britain.'[25] The consequences of this for the reception of individual authors, and works, are locally significant but also add up to a major pressure on transatlantic literary relations, involving hard commercial competition but also ideological contests over intellectual property and democratic access to knowledge and diversion.

[22] William St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 374–93; John Hruschka, *How Books Came to America: The Rise of the American Book Trade* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012), chs 5 and 6.

[23] John Bidwell, 'The Brandywine Paper Mill and the Anglo-American Book Trade, 1787–1837' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1992); James Raven, *London Booksellers and American Customers: Transatlantic Literary Community and the Charleston Library Society, 1748–1811* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002), xix.

[24] Scott, *Journal*, 231.

[25] St Clair, *Reading Nation*, 387.

As part of the growing campaign for fair recompense, which intensified after Scott's death in 1832, British writers engaged directly with the federal government. One revealing record of this is a manuscript deposition, on vellum, dated 2 February 1837 and now in the Huntington Library. *Address of Certain Authors of Great Britain to the Senate of the United States, in Congress Assembled* presents an eleven-point argument for the restitution of copyright law protecting foreign publications. Henry Clay introduced it to Senate on the same day, and it was referred (inconclusively) to a committee. The *Address* is attested by fifty-one authors, some of whose signatures are cut out from sheets of the printed address (these include Moore, Southey, Amelia Opie, Thomas Carlyle, and Joanna Baillie), though others sign the document itself. The first of these is Campbell, followed by Charles Lyell, Harriet Martineau, and Maria Edgeworth.[26] As had happened in previous submissions, the case of Scott was used to sharpen the appeal. Authors had to wait until the Chace Act of 1891, however, for the introduction of international copyright in the United States.

Literary works were produced in transatlantic contexts in other ways. Phillis Wheatley's *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* (1773) was written in Boston but first published in London. The novelist and essayist John Neal spent four years working in Britain (1823–7) and publishing with British presses, especially Blackwood in Edinburgh. John James Audubon published *Birds of America* (1827) in Edinburgh and London. Bentley's Standard Novels series included American works such as Cooper's, both reflecting and extending an appreciative British readership. In his *Lectures on American Literature* (1829), Samuel L. Knapp reflected that defences such as Dwight's *Remarks on the Review of Inchiquin's Letters* had produced a reaction, especially in Britain, in favour of American literature, making Charles Brockden Brown, for example, far more acclaimed abroad than in the United States.[27]

In turn, American editors, commentators, and collectors proved instrumental in the textual histories of major British works. Freshly set editions of Wordsworth's collections of poems were available in the United States from 1802. The first American edition of Wordsworth's poems appeared in 1824; and in 1837 Henry Reed edited the (then) complete works, published in Philadelphia and reprinted many times throughout the nineteenth century. As Lance Newman has shown, this was 'greeted as a national triumph' for American publishing.[28] In 1832 Fitz-Greene Halleck published the first complete edition of Byron's works and letters (some of them previously suppressed). The most complex and surprising case is that of Keats, whose long letters to George and Georgiana in Louisville include drafts of poems not as addenda but as part of a narrative. Here, the textual evidence of Romanticism is embedded in a consciously transatlantic

[26] Huntington MS HM 11234. The number of signatories claimed in the document is fifty-four.

[27] Samuel L. Knapp, *Lectures on American Literature, with Remarks on Some Passages of American History* (New York: Elam Bliss, 1829), 139.

[28] Lance Newman, 'Henry David Thoreau as Wordsworthian Poet', in Pace and Scott (eds), *Wordsworth in American Literary Culture*, 122–3.

discourse, and details within the letters and the poems are in dialogue with each other.[29] Furthermore, some of Keats's writing appeared first in the United States. George Keats showed his brother's letters to like-minded intellectuals in Louisville. John Howard Payne recorded his impressions of these in the New York *Ladies' Companion* in 1837, and in turn this piece was reprinted in the *Ladies' Pocket Magazine* in London in 1838. Two of Keats's letters to his brother Tom, and the ode 'To Apollo', appeared in the Unitarian and transcendental journal *The Western Messenger* (1836–8), edited in Louisville by James Freeman Clarke. Keats's fame, as notices of George's death in Louisville in December 1841 clearly show, had become part of the intellectual culture of Kentucky. In 1839, George Keats sent the manuscript of 'To Autumn' to Anna Barker, subsequently married to Samuel Gray Ward; from their granddaughter the manuscript passed to Amy Lowell and then into the collections of the Houghton Library at Harvard. This is just one example of the personal and family connections leading to the deposition of central Romantic texts in United States libraries. The routine model of the literary collector, often casually maligned as an acquisitive cash-purchaser of cultural heritage, is entirely inadequate to the ways in which British Romantic texts found safe haven, and future scholarly editors, in the United States. Major editions such as the Bollingen Coleridge and the Cornell Wordsworth have underpinned subsequent interpretative scholarship and also attest to the cultural weight of British Romanticism in the United States, established much earlier than in British literary-critical history.

The more hostile implications of 'engagement' remained pertinent in the period itself, however. Robin Jarvis's work on transatlantic readers of travel accounts includes analysis of an often rebarbative reviewing culture, and of wars between periodicals with different political stances on the United States.[30] I would like to take an example from an especially hard-edged transatlantic cultural dispute. This is the case of John Dunn Hunter, a white American who was captured as an infant, in about 1800, and brought up west of the Mississippi by the Kansas and Osage peoples. He returned east about 1816, and in 1822 published *Manners and Customs of Several Indian Tribes Located West of the Mississippi*, in Philadelphia. In 1823 the retitled and enlarged *Memoirs of a Captivity among the Indians of North America* was published in London. There were two London editions in 1823 and a third in 1824. A series of enthusiastic British reviews ensued, with prominent notices in the *Quarterly Review* and the *Monthly Review* criticizing United States policy towards the peoples Hunter had described in attentive, unsentimental, detail.[31] Hunter was fêted in London society over the winter of 1823–4, was presented at court, and won influential support for his schemes to improve the lot of

[29] Fiona Robertson, 'Keats's New World: An Emigrant Poetry', in Michael O'Neill (ed.), *Keats: Bicentenary Readings* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997); Denise Gigante, *The Keats Brothers: The Life of John and George* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011).

[30] Robin Jarvis, *Romantic Readers and Transatlantic Travel: Expeditions and Tours in North America, 1760–1840* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012).

[31] John Dunn Hunter, *Memoirs of a Captivity among the Indians of North America*, ed. Richard Drinnon (New York: Schocken, 1973), xv–xxix.

American Indians. On his return to the United States in 1824, however, he faced a hostile campaign to prove him a fake. After a trip down the Ohio with Robert Owen, who was seeking lands to form the model community of New Harmony, Hunter involved himself in trying to find a haven for the Quapaws, then developed a wider scheme to secure lands for displaced tribes on the border with Mexico. Britain's Prime Minister George Canning supported Hunter's plan, but it was strongly opposed in the United States, and early in 1827 Hunter was murdered by Cherokees in the pay of prominent white Texans. British writers drew extensively on accounts of North America by earlier writers (most famously Bartram, Hearne, and Adair). As the case of Hunter shows, however, British reception was also a highly political factor in the current affairs of the United States; and could be both high-profile and dangerous.

Hunter's case also highlights the widespread interest in American Indian cultures which recent scholarship has made central to discussions of Romanticism. In the United States, American Indians were used to represent and authenticate the freedom and 'natural' politics of the new United States (hence the rebels of the Boston Tea Party, dressed as Mohawk warriors) just as they faced displacement and suppression within it.[32] Tim Fulford has argued for 'Indians' formative role in the aesthetics and politics of Romanticism', and there is an expansive critical literature on the 'Red' or 'Indian' Atlantic, especially on the figure of the 'dying', solitary, and isolated American Indian.[33] Eulogistic imaginings all too easily served an increasingly aggressive federal policy and seemed to aestheticize, in advance, the genocide sanctioned by the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Writers inherited from Enlightenment analyses (by Montesquieu, Rousseau, Smith, Ferguson, Raynal, Lahontan, and Robertson) a belief that societies observing non-Christian beliefs and non-European trading practices represented not a different but an earlier culture, feeding fantasies about 'primitive' ways of life. Their ventriloquisms of primitivism were influenced by other eighteenth-century imaginings of older cultures, notably those associated with the Gaelic warrior-bard 'Ossian'. The comparison with American Indians was drawn by Hugh Blair in *A Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian* (1763), and Thomas Jefferson's debts to Ossian are clear in his representation of the speech of Chief Logan in *Notes on the State of Virginia*. In contrast to British writings about the slave trade, British writings about American Indians emphasize difference and the possibility of danger. American Indians occupying their own territories, unlike Africans abducted from theirs, were a threat to expansion—of settled land, crops, white populace. In a different way, however, American Indians became

[32] See Helen Carr, *Inventing the American Primitive: Politics, Gender and the Representation of Native American Literary Traditions, 1789–1936* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996), ch. 1; Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and US Indian Policy* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1982), esp. part 1.

[33] Tim Fulford, *Romantic Indians: Native Americans, British Literature, and Transatlantic Culture 1756–1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 12 (and, on Hunter, 236–54). See also Astrid Wind, '"Adieu to all": The Dying Indian at the Turn of the Eighteenth Century', *Symbiosis* 2.1 (1998), 39–55; and Kate Flint, *The Transatlantic Indian, 1776–1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), ch. 2.

objects of barter in the transatlantic economy, a selling point of poems, plays, travel writings, and in visual culture.

The native 'song', as in Southey's sequence of five *Songs of the American Indians* (1799), was especially popular in the form of the 'death-song', other examples of which are Joseph Warton's 'The Dying Indian' (1755; judged to be the first example of that major force in nineteenth-century writing, the dramatic monologue)[34] and Felicia Hemans's 'Indian Woman's Death-Song' (1828). There were also more positive images, of life rather than death, including William Bowles's 'Song of the American Indian', which invites the stranger to abide safely and to share in the hunt and in the deep forests; and more extended engagements, especially in prose fiction, where the depiction of American Indian communities often serves as social critique of European norms. Examples of the latter include Charlotte Lennox's *Euphemia* (1790) and the third volume of Charlotte Smith's *The Old Manor House* (1793), though in both these cases any admiration for tribal community is heavily qualified. Wordsworth's Solitary, in Book 3 of *The Excursion* (1814), finds American Indians a degraded people in modern life. The most important representation of 'good' and 'bad' American Indians, influential for Cooper and founding a long transatlantic tradition, was Campbell's *Gertrude of Wyoming* (1809), the first long British poem to be set entirely in the American colonies. Campbell took the name of the virtuous Oneyda chief, Outalissi, from Chateaubriand's *Atala* (1801), and portrayed as a 'Monster' the Mohawk Joseph Brant/Thayendanegea, a characterization to which Brant's children objected and which, in later editions, Campbell clarifies in an explanatory note.[35]

It is important, in consequence, to recognize that American Indians were not merely a topic within Romantic-period writing, but also a style of thought and expression, a way of writing outside established norms, or, as in the case of *Gertrude of Wyoming*'s Spenserian stanzas, a way of bringing new linguistic registers to bear on established poetic form and generic expectation. 'Indian songs' and the subgenre of the death-song were, often, notable experiments in language and metre. In 'The Complaint of a Forsaken Indian Woman' (1798), Wordsworth chooses a language of dignified simplicity, with just two lines (8 and 25) breaking out of the regular tetrameter. In contrast, and in undeclared dialogue with Wordsworth's 'Complaint', each of Southey's *Songs of the American Indians* experiments differently with irregular verse forms and varied stress patterns suggestive of 'impassioned' speech. Hemans's 'Indian Woman's Death-Song' uses different metrical forms for the narrator's scene-setting (blank verse, but of an irregular, fluid, kind, distinctly un-Miltonic) and the woman's song (couplets of rhymed heptameters, a form described as 'nearly obsolete' in R. S. Skillern's 1802 comments on English prosody).[36]

[34] Philip Hobsbaum, 'The Rise of the Dramatic Monologue', *Hudson Review* 28 (1975), 227–45.

[35] See Fulford, *Romantic Indians*, ch. 11.

[36] R. S. Skillern, *A New System of English Grammar; or English So Illustrated, as to Facilitate the Acquisition of Other Languages, whether Ancient or Modern. With an Appendix, containing A Complete System of Parsing* (Glo[u]cester: R. Raikes, 1802), 143.

One final consequence of Romanticism's transatlantic engagements serves as a reminder that these were just as much aesthetic as they were economic and material. Imagining across the Atlantic produced versions of an alternative culture, but also created new versions of British culture. Wordsworth's 'Elegiac Stanzas', number 33 of his *Memorials of a Tour on the Continent* (1820), commemorates a young Bostonian, Frederick William Goddard, who had travelled briefly with Wordsworth's party in Switzerland and had drowned in Lake Zurich soon afterwards. Wishing for 'Herbs moistened by Virginian dew' to strew Goddard's grave, since it 'may never know the care | Of *kindred* human hands!', Wordsworth apostrophizes not only Goddard's youthful promise but also European cultural capital:

> Beloved by every gentle Muse
> He left his Transatlantic home:
> Europe, a realised romance,
> Had opened on his eager glance:
> What present bliss!—what golden views!
> What stores for years to come![37]

In a reversal of the discovery-narratives of European exploration of a golden west, Wordsworth sees the visiting American storing up culture for future years: the whole of Europe reprises the faith expressed in 'Tintern Abbey', '[t]hat in this moment there is life and food | For future years' (lines 65–6). Only Europe, not the Americas, can be a 'romance' fully 'realised'. Against this, however, we can set the remark made in 1851 by Henry David Thoreau, an admirer of Wordsworth but one who refashioned his philosophy of nature into an expression of American consciousness: 'We go eastward to realize history and study the works of art and literature, retracing the steps of the race; we go westward as into the future, with a spirit of enterprise and adventure.'[38]

In their imaginings of American Indians, British writers had explored the 'primitive' societies of an earlier stage of culture. In their encounters with the United States, however, British writers were themselves becoming types of an older culture—authoritative, but newly relative. Even anglophiles such as Washington Irving subtly brought British culture within the descriptive grasp of American writers. In 1817 Irving spent four days visiting Walter Scott at Abbotsford, part of a tour of Britain which led to *The Sketchbook* and, in 1835, to the publication of 'Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey', in which Irving adds to first-hand accounts of Scott a series of anecdotes and descriptions of Newstead Abbey, its environs, and people known to Byron. As recorded by Irving, Scott was fascinated by the vast natural forms of North America, and also interested in its history (as instanced by a memorial Scott had found among the papers of Charles Edward Stuart, dated 1778, from American Jacobites). Although Irving's accounts celebrate Scott and

[37] Lines 45–64, in *Wordsworth: Poetical Works*, ed. Thomas Hutchinson, rev. Ernest de Selincourt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1904), 275–6. All other Wordsworth quotations are from this edition.
[38] Henry David Thoreau, *Annals of America*, 8 (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1976), 126.

Byron, they also locate both writers among legends, superstitions, amassed historical detail, and (for Byron) a haunted ancestral pile. In so doing, they show once again how temporal and geographical comparison, differential constructions of national identity and authenticity, and a pervasive, shifting, cultural relativity proved central to literary self-definition and to the evolution of Romanticism, on both sides of the Atlantic.

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